UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/147
21 February 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 21 FEBRUARY 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

In accordance with instructions I have received, I would request you to circulate the text of the enclosed statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic on 21 February 1997 as a document of the Security Council (see annex).

(Signed) Eldar G. KOULIYEV
Permanent Representative

97-04566 (E) 240297 240297

/...

Annex

[Original: Russian]

Statement issued on 21 February 1997 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan

Reports have recently been appearing in the mass media in the Russian Federation and a number of other countries about illegal deliveries of a large quantity of Russian weaponry to Armenia.

In particular, the "Interfax" agency transmitted on 14 February 1997 a report on a press conference given by the Minister for Cooperation with the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) of the Russian Federation, Aman Tuleyev, in the course of which the Minister referred to deliveries of weaponry to Armenia which had bypassed the President and Government of the Russian Federation. The Minister emphasized that this illegal activity was being engaged in by specific structures in the Russian leadership which, over the past two years, had sent to Armenia 84 T-72 tanks, 50 infantry fighting vehicles, and spare parts. This incident is not the only one in a series of reliable reports of the Russian Federation providing military assistance to Armenia, which committed armed aggression against Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is particularly concerned at the fact that this activity reached significant levels after the ceasefire agreement of 12 May 1994, which Azerbaijan is continuing to observe, demonstrating political will despite the continuing occupation of its territory by Armenia. At the same time as Azerbaijan is firmly and consistently pursuing the course of a political settlement of the conflict, the duplicity of Armenia's policy is becoming ever more apparent; on the one hand, Armenia proclaims its alleged pursuit of the political path, while on the other hand it continues to build up its military potential in violation of international norms and obligations.

The Azerbaijani leadership has more than once drawn the attention of the world community to the fact that illegal actions of this kind are counter to the United Nations and OSCE decisions on the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, particularly Security Council resolution 853 (1993), the statement by the President of the Security Council of 18 August 1993 (S/26326) and the decisions of the CSCE Committee of Senior Officials of 24 February and 14 March 1992, which called for the halting of military supplies to the States involved in the conflict on the grounds that they promoted the escalation of the conflict and the continued occupation of Azerbaijani territory.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan notes that the issue of deliveries of Russian weaponry has aroused the concern of prominent politicians in the Russian Federation, and was the subject of special discussion at a plenary meeting of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, which instructed its committees on defence, security and CIS affairs and relations with Russians in the CIS countries to carry out a comprehensive study of this issue. The Ministry welcomes the official request by a member of the Government of the Russian Federation to that country's leaders, and also to the Military

Prosecutor's Office, to verify whether illegal deliveries had taken place. At the same time, Azerbaijan notes the statement made in an interview with the Armenian agency "Noyan Tapan" by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Armenia, Andrei Urnov, to the effect that the equipment in question entered Armenia under the terms of inter-State agreements between Armenia and the Russian Federation. In any event, the Russian military deliveries to Armenia undermine the authority of the Russian Federation as a mediator in the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict.

The Ministry expresses the hope that as a result of the investigation of the military deliveries conducted by the competent Russian authorities and parliamentary committees, light will be shed on the degree of involvement of certain highly placed officials of the Russian Federation in this illegal activity, and that it will be properly appraised from both the legal and the political standpoint. The action of these individuals, guided above all by their own mercenary interests, has damaged and continues to damage not only the Russian mediation activity, but also bilateral Armenian-Russian relations, and in addition, in the view of a number of well-known Russian politicians, undermines the economy and defence capability of the Russian State.

The illegal deliveries of armoured vehicles to Armenia are a gross violation of the provisions of the Agreement on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. They confirm that Azerbaijan is right to be concerned at the numerous violations by Armenia of the agreement establishing OSCE, which Azerbaijan consistently explains to all parties to that agreement in multilateral and bilateral consultations. They reveal the sources of the considerable quantities of armaments and equipment and the ways in which they appear in parts of Azerbaijani territory occupied by Armenia. They confirm the justice of Azerbaijan's demands that appropriate measures should be taken to remove the arms and equipment illegally introduced by Armenia into the occupied Azerbaijani territories and to implement the agreement in our region in accordance with its provisions, which will serve the interests of all States parties to the agreement. The existing situation complicates efforts to find ways of solving the problem of flank limitations. It also negatively affects the atmosphere of the negotiations that are being started on the adjustment of the agreement.

Azerbaijan earnestly appeals to all States parties to the agreement which are concerned about these problems, and in the first place to the Russian Federation, to take all appropriate measures, and in particular to conduct, in accordance with the procedures specified in the OSCE agreement, comprehensive and full-scale inspections both in the territory of Armenia and in the Azerbaijani territories occupied by it for the purpose of identifying and subsequently removing illegal weaponry, and also to take steps to prevent this kind of illegal practice in the future.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan expresses the hope that the leadership of the Russian Federation will take very serious note of Azerbaijan's extreme concern at the illegal deliveries of weaponry to Armenia, and that the Russian reaction will be adequate and commensurate with the Russian Federation's international responsibilities, its role as facilitator in the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, its authority, its national interests and the high

level of progressively developing inter-State relations between Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation.

Azerbaijan calls on Armenia to recognize that a settlement needs to be sought not by building up military potential, which could lead to a still further escalation of the crisis. It must be clear by now, in Armenia as well, that there is no other way of settling the conflict than by accepting the recommendations of the Lisbon Summit and, on the basis of the principles proposed by the Chairman-in-Office of OSCE and supported by all the member States of OSCE, renewing the negotiating process on a political settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan that has caused so much suffering.